

REMARKS

Applicants request favorable consideration and allowance of this application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Status of the Claims

Claim 1-4, 7, and 13 are pending in the application, with Claim 1 being independent. Claim 1 has been amended. Applicants submit that no new matter has been added.

Rejection

Claims 1-4, 7 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,233,426 (Lee) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,541,712 (Fujitaka).

Interview Summary and Response to Rejection

The undersigned gratefully acknowledges the courtesies extended by the Examiner in the telephone interview conducted on December 1, 2006. In the interview, Applicants proposed amending Claim 1 to recite a spring configured and positioned to eliminate the play between the hinge member and the cover member in the axial direction of the hinge member, thereby making constant the axial positional relation between the hinge member and the cover member by biasing the cover member in a direction parallel to an axis of a rotary shaft of the hinge member. Applicants representative explained that one non-limiting example of these features is found in Figures 5 and 6, where the spring 214 eliminates the play between the hinge member 207 and the cover member 206 in the axial direction of the hinge member, thereby making constant the axial

positional relation between the hinge member and the cover member by biasing the cover member in a direction parallel to an axis of a rotary shaft of the hinge member, as shown by arrow “a” in Figure 5, and as discussed between page 18, line 12 and page 19, line 4 of the specification. Applicants representative also explained that neither the patent to Lee, nor the patent to Fujitaka is understood to disclose or suggest these features

In response, the Examiner indicated in the telephone interview that such an amendment would overcome the rejection over the patents to Lee and Fujitaka, but that the Examiner would conduct an additional search, requiring the filing of a Request for Continued Examination to enter such an amendment.

Accordingly, Applicants are filing this Amendment with a Request for Continued Examination. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that this Amendment be entered, and that the outstanding rejection be withdrawn.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, the application is now in allowable form. Therefore, early passage to issue is respectfully solicited.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,

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